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MEASURES

NEWS

The Newsletter of Emergency Measures Ontario

Volume 1, No. 1 Fall 1994

New Name — New Look for EMO

BY ELAINE SIMPSON

It may seem like a while since you've seen us. But we're back — new and improved!

Emergency Measures Ontario (EMO), is the new name of Emergency Planning Ontario. Some things have stayed the same — we're still a branch of the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Correctional Services, and part of their public safety division. However, many people felt, for some very good reasons, that our name needed to change. After considerable time and thought, not to mention an internal contest, Emergency Planning officially changed to Emergency Measures in spring of 1994.

The name change is not only more in keeping with the monikers of other emergency planning and preparedness organizations, both across Canada and internationally, it also reflects the broader nature of the work we do. While planning is key to dealing successfully with emergency situations, being prepared is also vital. No emergency plan can be completely successful unless planning and preparedness work together. "Emergency Measures" encompasses both of these concepts, rather than focusing solely on one or the other. It also better implies all aspects of dealing with emergencies, and helps convey the proactive work this office undertakes.

A new name for the organization also spawned a new name for the newsletter. You are now reading the

premiere issue of *Emergency Measures News*, the official newsletter for Emergency Measure Ontario. To go along with the new names, it seemed only natural that a new look for the newsletter was also in order. Although the look of publication may have been revamped, many regular features, like the coordinator's column, JEPP updates and timely stories, remain unchanged. We hope you like it!

This fall '94 issue represents the

return of a bi-annual publication; look for the next edition of *Emergency Measures News* in the spring of '95. It is our aim to keep you up-to-date on the activities of EMO, make you more familiar with the work we do and report on the emergencies that occur in Ontario. As always, we welcome comments and story ideas from readers. You are encouraged to send them to the editor at the address listed on page 2.

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Trains, Rains and Broken Window Panes
A review of 1994's hazardous situations

BY KATHY KERR

So far, 1994 has been a year of train derailments, potential flooding and severe weather conditions...to mention just a few of the emergency situations faced by communities throughout the province. Only four communities — Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Moosonee and Attawapiskat — actually declared emergencies due to impending flood conditions. However, many other incidents occurred which could have very easily escalated into large-scale emergencies.

Threatening Spills

Communities such as Longlac, Gogama, Mosa Township, Markham and Agincourt all experienced train derailments. While some of these did not pose any immediate threat to the community, others caused residents to evacuate or alter their daily activities

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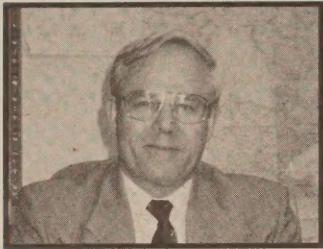
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Coordinator's Column

BY JIM ELLARD

Slow but steady, are the words I would use to describe the progress of Emergency Measures Ontario over the past couple of years. The need to overcome tight budgets, scarce resources and unanticipated events is a familiar scenario to most readers of *Emergency Measures News*. Occasionally, EMO ran up against obstacles that caused us to retrace our steps, or find detours, but we continue to achieve most of our goals.

One of the highlights of this past year was conducting a survey of all municipalities in Ontario. We learned that approximately 75 per cent of municipalities have plans in place that protect more than 90 per cent of Ontario's population. These findings suggest that the time has come to redirect our energies (and scarce resources) away from developing plans, and instead, focus on other areas.

For the remainder of '94 and into '95, the spotlight will be on exercise programs, training and public education. Staff at Emergency

Measures Ontario have begun the process — but to make our efforts truly effective, we need your participation as emergency planners and responders.

Holding regular exercises is an essential part of ensuring that emergency plans and preparedness arrangements will work in the way they are intended. We will continue to encourage communities across the province to test and, consequently, increase the effectiveness of their plans.

In the area of training, last year we introduced three-day emergency preparedness and response courses, and this year we will begin presenting three-day exercise design courses. We have limited all of our courses to a maximum of three days to encourage greater attendance, and we hope to shorten them even more by using computers and other long distance education technologies, as they become available. Our training is designed to be taken on the road to communities all across Ontario, wherever the numbers justify holding a course. In time, we will develop and conduct emergency site management courses, and others, but this is contingent upon acquiring additional resources.

We feel there is a need to train approximately 10,000 Ontarians annually in the area of emergency planning and preparedness. Not everyone requires formal courses; many need only attend familiarization or awareness training. But, this too will require more resources than we currently have.

Another important area of

involvement for EMO, is with industry in developing joint community and industry emergency preparedness and response arrangements. In cooperation with the Major Industrial Accidents Council of Canada (MIACC), we developed and distributed a publication called *Guiding Principles for Joint Municipal and Industrial Emergency Preparedness* to all communities in Ontario. We are also planning to establish a committee of community and industry representatives in Ontario, to work with MIACC to reduce the frequency and severity of major industrial accidents involving hazardous substances. Our early goal will be to identify communities that have the greatest risk of industrial accidents, and then work on prevention, preparedness and response programs.

Finally, we recognize that there is a need for a comprehensive public education program that will help individuals take a few simple precautions to be better prepared to respond safely and effectively when emergencies arise. We feel that a well orchestrated and imaginative public education program is an important part of our motto "planning today for a safer tomorrow."

I look forward to reporting on the progress of these initiatives in the spring '95 issue of *Emergency Measures News*.

Until next time...

Emergency Measures Ontario is part of the public safety division of the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Correctional Services. *Emergency Measures News* is published twice yearly and distributed to municipalities and First Nations in Ontario, and to those who work to promote emergency preparedness.

Your ideas and comments are welcome. Please send them to the editor at:

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"This is a test...this is only a test"

Report on "Essex '94" nuclear exercise

BY ELAINE SIMPSON & MALCOLM SCOTT

Traveling to the ends of Ontario — or at least the most southwestern portion of the province — was on the agenda for staff from EMO's provincial preparedness section in August and September.

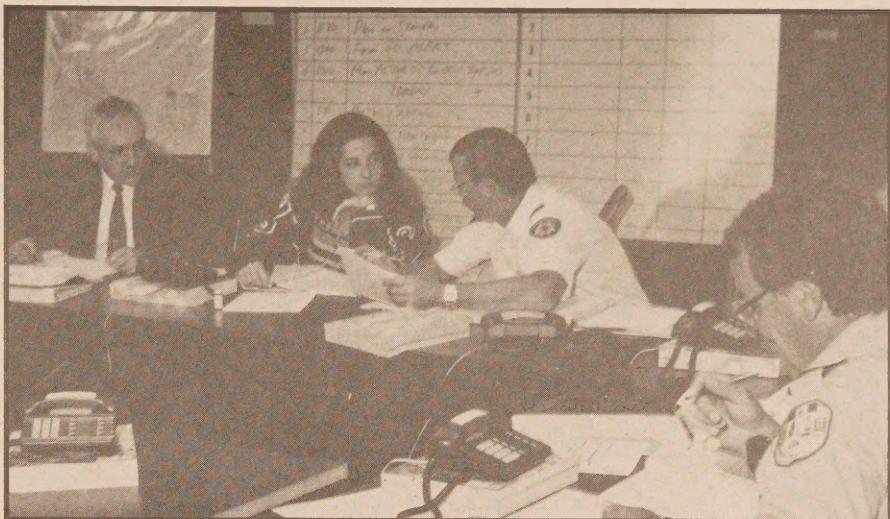
Meeting the Public

They were working with the town of Amherstburg and the townships of Malden and Anderdon — located south of Windsor along the St. Clair River — on their Tri-Community Emergency Response Plan. A public meeting was held September 8, to explain the points of the tri-community plan to local residents.

Like any good emergency plan, this one addresses typical situations that could easily happen in the community, such as transportation, severe weather and — as the area is home to large chemical manufacturing plants — even chemical emergencies. Information about the plan was relayed by members of the tri-community emergency planning committee including the Amherstburg fire chief and the reeve of Malden. A chemical industry representative and EMO personnel were also part of the panel of speakers.

But, what brought most of the crowd of approximately 50 people out to the meeting, is the existence of the Fermi 2 nuclear facility located approximately 16 kilometers away in Monroe Michigan.

Because of a problem with a turbine generator which took place on Christmas Day, 1993, the Fermi 2 facility has been shut down for over nine months. The latest information from Fermi 2 is that the facility may be again up and running this fall. Residents of Amherstburg, Anderdon and Malden, being in close proximity to the facility, were understandably



Municipal control group staff discuss some of the "operational curves" being thrown at them by the exercise control group.

very interested in knowing more about the tri-community nuclear emergency plan, and the "Essex '94" nuclear exercise, scheduled for Sept. 19 & 20.

The Plan in Action

The test exercise began Sept. 19 with the initial notification. On Sept. 20, the exercise began in earnest, as did a similar exercise being run by Fermi 2 and Michigan State Police. The Anderdon municipal offices were transformed into the operations centre, by far the busiest area during the exercise. It was from this site that the municipal control group (MCG) would work.

The MCG was made up of approximately 15 staff, including local politicians, police, fire, municipal, and medical representatives, as well as an EMO representative. The MCG's task was to make decisions to respond to information, as it was received from the exercise control group.

The exercise scenario was based on an accident at Fermi 2. Municipal and provincial organizations involved took action based on their emergency plan. This included:

- Five local police services, the

Ontario Provincial Police and the Ministry of Transportation monitoring traffic and security issues from a traffic control centre.

- Essex County Social Services and local fire departments operating reception centres to receive evacuees and monitor them for radioactive contamination.
- Local school boards efficiently evacuating students from the tri-community area.

The exercise continued for about four hours, with the exercise control group throwing various operational curves at the municipal control group. The MCG was also given many opportunities to use their judgment and make decisions based on the tri-community nuclear emergency plan.

The exercise proved an operational success, but the big job of assessing the response and recommending improvement to the preparedness program is still at hand. However, since nuclear emergency plans should be tested annually, so it won't be long before the insights gained through "Essex '94" can be put to good use.

On the Road Again...

Report on EMO's Training Section



As training section staff Eleanor Carter and Mary Cann look on (centre), Chatham students take a "hands-on" approach to exercise design using a miniature version of Trillium.

Despite one flat tire, one delayed aircraft, two stops to photograph moose, countless driving hours, and mosquitoes almost the size of 747s, staff from Emergency Measures Ontario's training section continue to be unstoppable!

Since it was launched in November 1991, the emergency planning and response (EPR) course has been conducted in over 40 locations around Ontario, and presented to more than 1,100 students. The EPR course is designed to cover the basics of how to prepare an emergency plan and respond to an emergency.

"One more EPR course is planned before the end of 1994," said Mary Cann, manager of the training section, "and two are on the calendar for early 1995."

The three-day course, which is recognized as the equivalent of the Plans and Operations Peace (POP) course offered at the Canadian Emergency Preparedness College in Arnprior, uses lectures, videos and group exercises to get the information across.

"When we listed the places we planned to visit, we had no idea what facility we would use when we got

there," Mary recalled. "I hoped someone from each community would offer to help us find a place, and they did." When staff flew to northern locations, every community they visited was helpful in rounding up projectors, televisions and whatever else was required to set up a classroom.

"The course has been well received by almost all of our students," Mary said. "We ask them to complete a critique form, and to give us comments on how we're doing."

"The overall average on the 'report card' students have given us is 90 per cent," she noted. "One of the nicest comments was from a student in northern Ontario who said 'I learned a lot and I had fun doing it.'"

The mosquitoes? "I found that during the Geraldton course I could deliver a presentation, flip the slides, swat mosquitoes and scratch bites all at the same time!" Mary said.

The moose? "He or she (we're not sure, and we certainly try to be gender-neutral) is now in the slide presentation we use to introduce Amethyst, our course's northern community, to our northern students," she noted.

Trillium, another mythical/typical community set somewhere in southern

Ontario, is used as the focal point for the exercises on other courses.

Mary and senior training officer, Eleanor Carter, will be presenting the EPR course in St. Catharines this fall, and in Durham Region and Espanola in early 1995.

A new course on exercise design was launched in Chatham in October, and will be repeated in Kingston in early December. To be eligible for the new course, applicants must have completed either the EPR course or the POP course at Arnprior.

Applications are still being accepted for EPR and exercise design courses. To book space, please contact Mary Cann, at EMO's Toronto office by calling (416) 314-3723.



Schedule of EMO's Emergency Training Courses

Emergency Planning and Response Course

1994

Nov. 22 -24: St. Catharines

1995

Mar. 14 - 16: Oshawa

Mar. 28 - 30: Espanola*

(* for First Nations communities only)

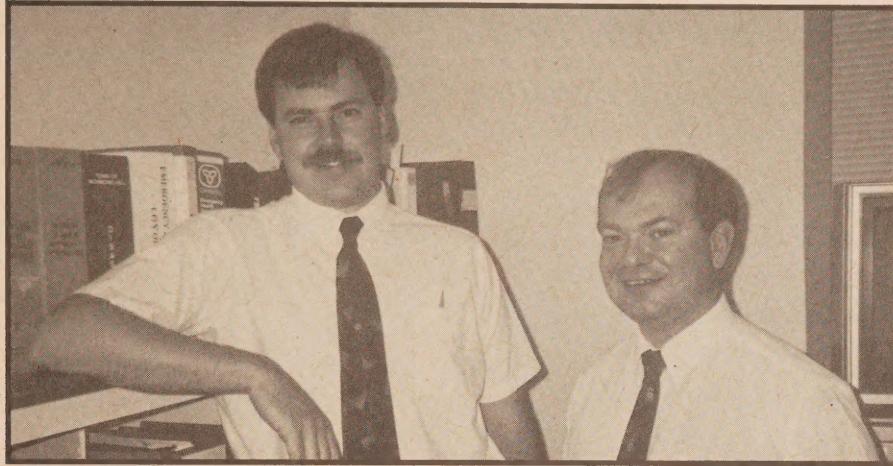
Exercise Design Course

1994

Dec. 6 - 8: Kingston

PROFILE:

EMO's Community Emergency Measures Advisers



Wayne Bennett (left) and Randy Reid

A big part of the work EMO does, is accomplished out in the field by the community emergency measures advisers. Community advisers provide invaluable assistance and advice to communities throughout the province working to draft or update emergency plans.

There are currently two community advisers working in the southeastern and northeastern offices respectively:

Randy Reid: Southeastern Area

Randy has been with EMO for several years. He joined the branch — then called Emergency Planning Ontario — in 1988, as a senior planning officer, after serving several years with the Canadian Armed Forces. Based in Toronto, Randy travelled frequently throughout Ontario. His territory included southeastern and northeastern Ontario — in effect, half of the province!

Subsequent to that, Randy took on the different challenge of community emergency measures adviser in 1992. Randy saw his territory shrink to a somewhat more manageable area of southeastern and southwestern Ontario. He worked in that capacity until 1993, when he put down some roots in Kingston and was designated

the official southeastern EMO rep.

Since joining EMO, Randy has participated in several declared emergencies, including the Hagersville tire fire, and most recently, the James Bay community floods.

"Over the years," said Randy, "my biggest challenge has been in successfully meeting the needs of all the communities I've worked with. We've seen a dramatic increase in the number of communities that now have emergency plans in place. That in itself brings a great deal of satisfaction."

Wayne Bennett: Northeastern Area

Wayne is a relative newcomer to EMO, having started work as the community emergency measures adviser for northeastern Ontario in May of this year. The territory Wayne covers is extensive, running from White River to the Quebec border, and from the Muskoka area in the south to the coast of James Bay. A large part of his time is spent assisting First Nation communities initiate and develop community emergency plans.

Wayne is no stranger to northern Ontario. From 1979 to 1994, Wayne worked on the front lines for the Ministry of Natural Resources in forest fire management. He battled

many blazes here in Ontario, including the Hagersville tire fire, and travelled to British Columbia in 1991 to help in a fire emergency there. Wayne also spent some time working at Queen's Park on human resources strategic planning.

"In the past, it was putting out fires and now it's working on planning and prevention — in one way or another, it seems my work has always involved dealing with emergencies," said Wayne. "I'm happy I can continue to work up in this area of the province, and hopeful that I can accomplish a lot of good work."

Up until September, EMO's northwestern emergency measures adviser was Calvin Harasemchuk. Calvin spent a great deal of time working with the area's First Nations and municipalities on improving emergency preparedness. He leaves EMO to pursue a career with the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Services in Kashechewan. Everyone at EMO wishes Calvin all the best in his new job. As this position will be vacant for the next few months, please direct any inquiries regarding this area to the manager of community preparedness in Toronto at (416) 314-3723.

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One thing that hasn't changed is the role EMO plays in enhancing the state of emergency preparedness within Ontario. In fact, we've grown larger in staff and scope over the past year, and continue to help communities throughout the province increase the number of emergency plans in place. Our goal in the foreseeable future is to improve even further on these successes, to increase training and exercise initiatives and to make emergency planning and preparedness second-nature in as many Ontario communities as possible.

JEPP Update

BY MAUREEN GRIFFITHS

Each year, the federal government sets aside a sum of money under the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP). JEPP funding helps communities across Canada achieve a higher level of emergency preparedness. Emergency Measures Ontario is responsible for administering the Ontario portion of this program.

Since its inception in 1982, JEPP has provided approximately \$17 million in funding assistance to Ontario for a wide variety of worthwhile provincial and community projects.

While the federal portion of this cost sharing program remains at a maximum of 45 per cent, the demand for funds continues to exceed their availability. As a result, some types of projects are no longer funded and funding limits have been placed on

other projects.

Last Year (April 1993 - March 1994)

The level of funding from the federal government decreased to \$1.7 million last year. Of this, approximately \$1.4 million supported community projects

Deadline for JEPP funding applications for 1995/96 is Monday, November 15, 1994

such as the development of emergency plans and exercises. Almost every project that met the JEPP guidelines was approved.

Another \$310,000 supported provincial projects, including the development and delivery of training courses by Emergency Measures

Ontario and the Office of the Fire Marshal.

This Year (April 1994 - March 1995)

A total of just over \$1.7 million was allocated to Ontario under JEPP. There have been 127 projects approved so far this year, and those projects that have not yet been approved, have been placed on a waiting list. In the event of any slippage of funds, projects on the waiting list will be considered.

As in past years, the projects given highest priority were those related to the development or revision of plans and exercises to test the plans. Projects received on a district, county, regional or joint community basis also received a higher priority.

Next Year (April 1995 - March 1996)

It is anticipated that the JEPP program will continue again next year, though

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poisonous substance, was spilled, some into the local water system. Highway 11 was closed for five days.

Other communities were also busy dealing with spills of hazardous materials from trucks or industrial sites. Back in February, there was a fire involving chlorine crystals in Vaughan. In June, Burlington emergency services dealt with a fire involving polyurethane panels and, subsequently, a large plume of smoke containing highly poisonous hydrogen cyanide. Also in June, North York officials handled a spill of sodium hydroxide, which can be poisonous and/or corrosive, after an explosion in a factory. In all of these examples, sections of industrial areas were evacuated.

Threatening Waters

Flooding was of particular concern this spring in the James Bay area. The

community of Fort Albany declared an emergency due to the threat of flood, but no evacuation was necessary. However, just two weeks later, after declaring emergencies due to impending flood conditions, the communities of Kashechewan and Attawapiskat evacuated a total of 1,269 residents to Moosonee for four and five days respectively. All evacuations progressed smoothly and residents returned to communities that were, luckily, unscathed by the floods.

The summer of '94 was somewhat unpredictable. At times the weather was wonderful and the sun shone brightly. However, we also experienced the brutal violence that the skies can unleash. Tornado-like conditions affected Scarborough, Avonmore, Marter Township, Alexandria, West Carleton and Parry Sound. Other areas of southern

Ontario received numerous bouts of severe thunderstorms and localized flooding.

Ontario is not without its "miscellaneous" emergency situations. Take, for example, the release of acetonitrile, a flammable and poisonous substance, into the St. Clair River. Water treatment plants were closed in the area and water had to be trucked in. There was also a fire involving 8,000 tires near Six Nations, and a truck which overturned near Longlac carrying 605 cylinders of propane and other inert gases.

Just to round out our emergency scenario, we also had a minor earthquake in Mount Hope and a spill of 26,000 pounds of a white, "lard-like" substance in Amherstburg.

As the tourism bureau would say, "Ontario has it all!"

Critical Incident Stress

BY MURRAY FIRTH

Emergency service personnel are hearing and reading more about stress everyday. In its simplest form, stress is the "fight or flight" response that ensures our survival. Stress may arise from family or marital conflicts or unresolved workplace or financial issues.

For emergency service workers, these common kinds of stress are compounded by the physical dangers, noise, human tragedy and fear that go along with an emergency situation. Stressful emergency situations can — and often do — bring on symptoms which have come to be known as critical incident stress.

What is a critical incident?

Dr. Jeffery Mitchell, clinical associate professor of Emergency Health Services, University of Maryland, defines a critical incident as "any situation faced by emergency service personnel that causes them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions, which have the potential to interfere with their ability to function, either at the scene or later."

It is estimated that most, if not all emergency responders will encounter a critical incident at some point during their careers. Events considered to be critical incidents include:

- line of duty injury;
- death or suicide of a fellow emergency worker;
- disaster or major multi-casualty incident;
- significant events involving children, especially death;
- incidents involving relatives or known victims;
- prolonged incidents;
- incidents that result in excessive media interest.

What is Critical Incident Stress (CIS)?

The emotional, physical, cognitive and behavioural responses to a critical incident are what is known as *critical incident stress* (CIS).

During a critical incident, or some time after the emergency, an emergency responder may begin to express stress symptoms that are beyond his or her coping skills. The symptoms may occur at the scene or up to 72 hours later. They may even be delayed for a week, a month or longer after the incident.

Symptoms may be acute, and may be physical — nausea, muscle tremors, sweating and chills — mental — nightmares, limited attention span, loss of concentration — or emotional — fear, grief, guilt, anger, resentment.

In addition, CIS sufferers may undergo changes in behaviour, such as physical isolation, increased use of alcohol or drugs or withdrawal. The cumulative impact of various incidents can also produce CIS.

Emergency responders are viewed by the public — and often view themselves — as being able to cope with the sights and sounds of disaster, death and destruction. Some may feel that admitting to a problem will be seen as a sign of weakness by peers or superiors. Consequently, many emergency responders bury the stress deep inside, where it may continue to fester and grow.

Eventually, this inability to deal with the problem will take its toll — and the costs may be substantial.

If the psychological trauma of critical incident stress is not resolved, emergency responders may experience decreased or poor work performance, greater frequency of accidents, increased conflict at work or home and take more sick leave. Agencies may be

affected by increased staff turnover and the loss of experienced personnel.

Critical Incident Stress Management

Fortunately, a terrific method of understanding and dealing with traumatic stress is available. Commonly referred to as *critical incident stress management* (CISM), it uses pre-incident education and post-incident counselling to deal with CIS.

Pre-incident education includes information on stress, CIS and stress management. Information on CIS should be part of entry-level emergency training and regular in-service education. Emergency response workers should be taught the skills needed to deal with CIS both at the scene, and in the hours and days immediately following an incident.

Command officers and supervisors also need to be taught to identify critical incidents and recognize stressed workers, and how to manage staff during very stressful and/or long duration incidents.

The second step should be the availability of ongoing CISM counselling for employees. In many areas of Ontario, you simply need to contact the CISM team in your region and explore a partnership. For other areas, you may need to create a CISM resource. For either approach, provincial CISM coordinators may be available to assist you.

Critical incident stress management is one element that is often left out of a disaster or emergency plan. Try to ensure its inclusion, and test your CISM response as you would your plan. CISM teams should be sought out or developed, consulted with and added to your resource list. Like any other aspect of the emergency response, critical incident stress can be planned for, managed and successfully dealt with.

Murray Firth is Ontario's first provincial critical incident stress coordinator. For more information on CIS, contact him at (705) 739-6226.

REPORT:

First Nations' Emergency Preparedness

Important work continues to be done in First Nation communities to ensure that emergency plans are in place. The following is a regional run-down of the latest developments:

Southeastern Area

- In Akwesasne, one planner and one assistant have been working on the community emergency program on a full-time basis. The plan itself is almost complete, and is being circulated for comment within the community. Two workshops and a three-day course have been conducted by EMO staff in Akwesasne. A community exercise program is also being developed.

- Tyendinaga First Nation has one part-time emergency planner. Its plan is also in the final stage. A one-day emergency planning workshop was conducted by EMO in October, and an exercise program will be conducted.

- In Alderville, a one-day community emergency planning workshop was conducted by EMO staff in September. An emergency planning coordinator has been appointed and work on an emergency plan has begun.

Northeastern Area

There are three major emergency planning initiatives being carried out by various communities:

- Mushkegowuk Tribal Council has hired a full-time emergency planning coordinator who is assisting in the development of plans for Moose Factory, New Post, Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Attawapiskat, and Peawanuk. Flood contingency plans are in place and several draft emergency plans have been developed.

- The United Chiefs and Councils of Manitoulin and the North Shore Tribal Council have developed draft emergency plans. Work is now

underway to customize these plans to reflect the needs of the communities. An emergency workshop was conducted in October.

- The Wabun Tribal Council is also interested in working with EMO staff to review and revise emergency plans in their communities.

Emergency Planning workshops have been requested by the Mushkegowuk, Manitoulin and North Shore Tribal Councils, and an Emergency Planning and Response course, geared to First Nations, will be held in Espanola in March of '95.

Northwestern Area

A two-day emergency planning workshop was conducted by EMO staff in March of this year for communities affiliated with the Union of Ontario Indians. Special thanks to Will Perkins, a Community Health Adviser with Dilico, and Louis Pelletier of the Fort William First Nations, for their assistance with this workshop. Since then, most of the communities represented at the workshop have developed draft community emergency plans.

- So far, the following First Nation communities have drafted emergency plans - Pays Plat, Fort William, Whitesand, Rocky Bay, Pic Heron, Pic Morbert, Longlac 58, and Ginoogaming.

- Lake Helen and Michipicoten First Nations have started working on their community emergency plans, and Couchiching First Nations have requested an emergency plan workshop.

EMO staff hope to be able to offer an emergency plan workshop for the NAN communities in northwestern Ontario soon.

Southwestern Area

- Six Nations have worked hard to complete their community

emergency plan and are now in the process of developing an exercise to test their plan. Last year a three-day EPR course was conducted in their community.

- Onyotak'a:ka First Nations have formed an emergency planning committee and have started working on their emergency plan. All members of their committee have taken the EMO three day EPR course.

- Another successful EPR course was conducted in the First Nation community of Walpole Island in June.

- The Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nations have developed a draft community emergency plan. They have also requested a workshop on emergency planning.

Any First Nation community requiring assistance in developing plans, exercises or workshops are urged to contact EMO's Community Emergency Preparedness Staff:

Kingston:

Randy Reid (613) 545-4590

Sudbury:

Wayne Bennett (705) 675-4550

Toronto:

Maureen Griffiths (416) 314-3723.

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the total allocation to Ontario is expected to be reduced.

JEPP guidelines and application forms for 1995/96 were mailed to all municipal and First Nation communities in September. Deadline for submitting applications to EMO is Monday, November 15, 1994.

The Province of Ontario (Emergency Measures Ontario) gratefully acknowledges the federal government's assistance in funding emergency preparedness projects.